

INFORMA TION REPORT INFORMATION REPORT

## CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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SOURCE: A former Cuban IS officer who served with the Cuban Intelligence Service until April 1964.

Headquarters Comment. The following information, as reported by source during a debriefing, reveals the misuse of official documentation and procedures by the General Directorate of Intelligence (Direccion General de Inteligencia - DGI).

Use of Altered and Fraudulent Documents by Cuban Intelligence

1. Cubans and other Latin American nationals operating for the General Directorate of Intelligence (Direccion General de Inteligencia - DGI) of the Cuban Ministry of Interior are issued Cuban passports in alias by the Cuban Foreign Ministry. These passports are considered legal in all respects by Cuban authorities. Cuban agents also use valid passports of a number of Latin American countries in which false entries are provided by Cuban intelligence authorities. The documents used by non-Cubans operating under IS auspices are intended to hide all traces of their travel into and out of Cuba.

Cuban Diplomatic Passports

2. Cuban diplomatic passports are issued in alias to IS staff personnel, consisting exclusively of Cuban nationals. They are never issued to aliens operating as agents of IS. There are over 300 staff employees, according to Source, all of whom are eligible to receive Cuban diplomatic passports in alias. A little over 100 staff employees are estimated by Source to have been documented in this way.

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3. Issuance of diplomatic passports in alias is an automatic process whenever an IS staff employee travels on assignment abroad. The employee involved provides the following items, which he selects personally, to one "Felix Rafael" in the DGI, who forwards the material to the Foreign Ministry:
  - a. Alias,
  - b. Diplomatic title,
  - c. One photograph.
4. The diplomatic title chosen by the staff employee is double-checked by the Foreign Ministry to avoid conflicts or discrepancies with real assignments. For instance, Source chose the title of "Consular Inspector" (Inspector Consular) for his diplomatic passport and the Foreign Ministry determined that no other Consular Inspector was scheduled to travel through the same area about that time. The Foreign Ministry official charged with issuing alias diplomatic passports for IS personnel is one Otero, Chief of the Diplomatic Passport Section. Otero does the work on short order, even completing a job on the same date the request is received, if necessary.
5. Frequently IS personnel using diplomatic passports travel in small groups. For instance, Source traveled to Mexico in early 1964 with a group of six or seven staff employees, all using diplomatic passports.
6. There are no distinguishing features, either in the passport serial number, the diplomatic title, or any other entry in a diplomatic passport issued in alias to distinguish it from a bona-fide document.

#### Cuban Ordinary Passports

7. Cuban ordinary passports are issued in alias to IS agents, including Cubans and nationals of other Latin American countries, by the Cuban Foreign Ministry in much the same way as in the case of diplomatic passports. In addition to the bearer's photograph, an agent provides cover information on himself for use in the passport which conforms as closely as possible to his real life. As an example, Source cited his own case, saying that he furnished a cover story containing his true date of birth, but listing him as single, even though he is married. Typical occupations shown on ordinary passports used by IS agents are "student" (estudiante) and "laborer" (obrero).
8. The only distinguishing feature for differentiating between a Cuban ordinary passport issued in alias to an IS agent and a bona-fide document is a special code for the serial number. Source thinks that alias passports for IS agents bear five-digit serial numbers while bona-fide passports bear six-digit serial numbers. Source's theory was based on the fact that his ordinary passport issued in alias bore a five-digit number while the bona-fide passport issued to his wife bore a six-digit number. This premise is in direct contradiction with a study of the numbering system found to be in use on Cuban ordinary passports. A pattern in numbering is found, with occasional discrepancies, in which a new set of accession numbers is used each year. Thus, serial numbers will be lower on passports issued at the beginning of the year than on those issued later in the same year. The serial

numbers are generally in a five-digit pattern, although it was noted that from June to December 1962 they ascended to six-digit numbers.

9. Source's ordinary passport issued in alias was allegedly obtained in January 1964, but was given an issuance date of 28 August 1963 and bears a serial number consistent with the accession pattern for the latter issuance date. Likewise, five other Cuban ordinary passports issued in 1963 in alias for use by agents under Source's supervision bear serial numbers adhering to the accession pattern corresponding to their particular dates of issue.
10. Grommets recently ceased to be used on photographs in Cuban ordinary passports.

Bona-fide Visas, Vaccination Certificates, and Passages

11. Diplomatic visas for use in Cuban diplomatic passports in alias are applied for directly by the Cuban Foreign Ministry to the foreign mission concerned in Havana. In Source's case application was first made in March 1964 for a Chilean visa and later for a Mexican visa, even though no travel to Chilo was contemplated. The reason for this was awareness by Cuban authorities of Mexican suspicion of Cuban diplomatic personnel. The Cuban authorities believed the Mexican Embassy in Havana would be less suspicious of a passport containing a visa from another Latin American country.
12. Passage bookings and international vaccination certificates for use by staff employees and agents using Cuban alias passports are also obtained through the Cuban Foreign Ministry. Vaccination certificates are obtained from the Instituto Cubano de Amistad con los Pueblos (ICAP). IS personnel's passages are always booked on Cubana Airlines because such fares are payable in Cuban pesos. No passages are booked on Soviet or Czech airlines because these require payment in U.S. dollars, which are scarce for the Cuban Government.
13. After a Cuban diplomatic passport has been used for one round trip, an exit permit from the Cuban Foreign Ministry, known as "Visto Bueno," is required for each subsequent departure from Cuba. The Foreign Ministry issues these to personnel using alias passports in the same way as they would for bona-fide documents.
14. Foreign visas in ordinary passports issued in alias to IS agents are applied for directly by the agents to the foreign missions concerned in Havana.

Types of Foreign Passports Used by IS Agents

15. The Cuban IS makes use of valid passports from a number of countries, including Mexico, all Central American countries, Argentina, British Guiana, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Haiti, Paraguay, Peru, and Venezuela, for documenting its agents. The IS had no access to, nor need for, passports from Spain and the United States. Source specified that the IS does not use Uruguayan passports because the Cuban Government does not wish to endanger its good relations with that country. Valid filled-in and blank passports from

the various countries are obtained by the IS through the local Communist Parties in the countries concerned.

#### Forgery and Falsification Capabilities

16. The IS has no capabilities for making false passports or internal documents from any country because of the difficulty of matching the paper and the technical problems involved in the engraving and printing process. It also lacks capability for eradicating entries in passports because of the problem involved in attempting to delete entries without defacing the documents.
17. Falsification and forgery is limited to filling in valid blank foreign passports, making photograph and page substitutions in bona-fide foreign passports, and placing false travel entries in foreign passports. Travel entries from western Europe and Latin America can be forged. Source did not know whether the IS itself made the photograph and page substitutions and forgeries. All documents requiring forgeries and substitutions were turned over to one "Alfonso," in the IS, who took them to a site unknown to Source. Source theorized that the forgeries and substitutions may have been done by the Departamento de Seguridad del Estado (Department of State Security - DSE), the counterintelligence arm of the Cuban Government, which he said has much more personnel than the DGI.

#### Travel Pattern of IS Agents

18. Prospective agents recruited by the IS in other Latin American countries and brought to Cuba for training in methods of sabotage and other subversive activities are provided with detached visas and spurious passports to conceal the fact that they ever entered Cuba.
19. In order that no Cuban visa will appear in an agent trainee's bona-fide passport on his way to Cuba, the Cuban mission in a Latin American country issues the Cuban visa on a separate sheet of paper. In 1963 most agent trainees were being brought into Cuba through Mexico, where the Cuban Embassy issued the separate visas. Early in 1963 Mexican immigration officers began using a rubber stamp bearing the notice "Salio para Cuba" (Departed for Cuba), with the date on it, which they automatically stamped in all passports of travelers proceeding to Cuba. To counter this move the IS began replacing, wherever possible, the pages of the passports bearing this entry with blank pages from valid passports from the same country as that of the traveler. Source also believes that in 1964 the travel pattern of a few prospective agents proceeding to Cuba may have been modified, thus decreasing slightly the number entering through Mexico.
20. To conceal the agent's travel when leaving Cuba, he is provided for the first leg of the journey with a Cuban ordinary passport in alias. The route of travel is from Havana to Prague. Czech authorities collect these passports upon landing in Prague. Source does not know what disposition is made of the Cuban passports by the Czechs, but he asserts that they are never returned to the agent.

21. For the second leg of the journey, carrying the agent from Prague via western Europe back to his native land, he is provided in Havana, before departure, with a passport from another Latin American country. The non-Cuban passport may be the agent's bona-fide document which has been returned to him or it may be another valid Latin American passport pressed into service for the purpose. If the agent's own passport bears no evidence of travel into Cuba it will be used for this purpose, being "brought up to date" with forged western European entries to explain the gap between the time when he left for Cuba and when he arrived in Prague, but showing his mode of travel to be such that he never passed through either Cuba or Czechoslovakia. Should the agent's bona-fide passport bear the Mexican cachet showing that he proceeded to Cuba, the IS replaces the page bearing such entry with a blank page from a valid passport of the same country if feasible. If page substitution is not possible, either because no other passport from the same country is available or because substitution proves too difficult, the IS will provide the agent with another passport, from his own country if available, or from another Latin American country. The substitute passport may be a filled-in original, in which case a photograph substitution will be made, and the agent will travel under the identity of the original bearer.
22. In other cases, where valid blank passports are used, the agent may even travel under his true identity after "surfacing" on the second leg of the journey, in western Europe, provided the passport used is from his own country. In such a case information from his bona-fide passport will be copied directly in the blank passport. If the passport is from a country differing from that of the agent, his identity will be changed. As in the case of travel under the agent's bona-fide passport, in the case of spurious non-Cuban passports, false travel entries are made to account for the agent's time spent in Cuba, placing him in western Europe, but not in Cuba nor Czechoslovakia, during that period.

Quality and Availability of Spurious Documentation

23. Providing documentation for agent trainees is the responsibility of the IS country desk officer handling trainees from the particular country. The country desk officers receive and maintain custody of passports coming from the Communist Parties in their areas of jurisdiction. Although the agent's training in Cuba may take several weeks, or even a few months, it often takes a year or more for the country desk officer to be able to provide his trainees with the proper documentation. Source commented that invariably a country desk officer will be short one spurious passport in his "collection" of passports for a group of about six trainees. Where possible the officer will "borrow" a passport from his colleague from another country desk.
24. On at least one occasion forged travel entries made in an agent's passport were found to have a chronological error shortly before the agent's departure from Cuba. The error consisted of a false exit cachet for a given port of entry bearing a date preceding that furnished on the false entry cachet for the same port of entry, a physical impossibility in true life. Despite the discovery of this error the IS

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made no attempt to make a correction, hoping that no immigration inspectors abroad would notice the discrepancy.

1. Headquarters Comment. Presumably Juan Nilo Otero Rodriguez, Director of the Secretariat of the Foreign Minister.

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